

# **Michigan State Agency Status Report #1 On Hurricane Katrina EMAC and Energy Emergency**

**Representing information as of 2:45 PM on 09/02/05**

**September 2, 2005**

## **SITUATION OVERVIEW:**

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina made landfall from the Gulf of Mexico as a Category 4 Hurricane with maximum sustained winds near 135 mph. The hurricane was very large with hurricane force winds extending 125 miles from the center. The storm had severe impacts on the Gulf states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, as well as some inland states such as Georgia, Tennessee, and Kentucky, before finally dissipating.

Storm surge flooding, direct impacts from winds and rain, failed infrastructure including utilities, failed dike segments and resultant flooding has caused widespread displacement, loss of life, property, and services. Flooding is as much as 20 feet above normal tide levels, with runoff causing levels to worsen over several days, even after the hurricane had passed. Although flood levels are no longer worsening, public health and safety concerns have continued to increase.

The affected states are part of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) and thus are able to request assistance from other states, including Michigan, that are a part of the compact. This compact, headed at the national level by FEMA direction, provides the most organized, responsible, and coordinated, and effective means for providing resources and assistance of all types to the affected states, and localities within them.

Individuals who wish to assist in disaster response and recovery activities are, at this time, advised to make a contribution in the form of a monetary donation. Financial assistance has been identified as the most effective, efficient, organized and appropriate type of assistance that can be provided at this time. Information about contributions can be found at the Michigan government web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/>, and at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

**Individuals and organizations are currently advised NOT to self-deploy to the areas affected by the disaster events. This is because such assistance needs to be organized to coordinate effectively with agencies and efforts that are already under way in those areas. Many of the response activities in and near the disaster areas require extensive training and health-related preparations. It is important that current efforts not be unduly diverted or distracted by efforts to accommodate any unauthorized or unrequested personnel who may not have not been sufficiently prepared, trained, and coordinated with existing response frameworks.**

**INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN MICHIGAN THAT WISH TO VOLUNTEER AND/OR GIVE SUPPLIES AND OTHER ASSISTANCE SHOULD CALL MICHIGAN'S "HURRICANE HOTLINE" AT 1-888-535-6136.**

The State of Michigan has identified resources and types of assistance that can be provided to affected states through the EMAC, some of which are already being deployed to the requesting states. Michigan has also prepared, and continues to prepare, various resources to accommodate evacuees from the affected areas.

In addition, the significance of the Gulf of Mexico region to the energy sectors of the national economy has affected the supply and pricing of fuel throughout the country. Because of the vital need for maintaining an adequate supply of such resources, especially to support emergency response and recovery needs, Governor Jennifer Granholm has issued executive orders stemming from a declared state of energy emergency. These executive orders promote the availability and effective use of a continued supply of energy in Michigan.

### **STATE OF MICHIGAN ACTIONS:**

#### **Office of the Governor**

Governor Jennifer Granholm has been personally leading activities to coordinate all departments of state government to identify and steer resources toward assisting affected areas, as needed, and to organize public, private, and nonprofit assistance and volunteer activities to support both the disaster areas and the needs of evacuees from those areas that will be housed in Michigan.

The Governor activated the State Emergency Operations Center today at 8:30 am to coordinate information and activities among all state departments as well as other agencies that they work with.

To address the energy concerns, three executive orders were issued, filed with the Secretary of State in the afternoon of Wednesday August 31, 2005. One order declared a state of energy emergency, which allowed a second order to temporarily waive (until the state of energy emergency ends) the EPA requirements for the use of low vapor pressure gasoline in Southeast Michigan, and the third order to allow a temporary lifting of the restrictions on the number of hours commercial drivers can be on the road in the delivery of fuels.

A unique fundraising event is being organized, called "Michigan Cares, Michigan Gives," which will be simulcast on all commercial and noncommercial radio and television stations on Friday, September 9. The event is designed to enlist media and celebrity support for efforts to collect funds for use in disaster response and recovery efforts. The event will be connected with a toll-free number, 1-800-HELP-NOW, that can be used to make contributions. The Michigan Division of the American Red Cross is a key organization that uses contributions for disaster relief and recovery.

#### **Department of Agriculture**

The department has been examining the gas supply inventory. They have veterinarians that can coordinate (with Michigan State Police personnel) about animal issues for the affected areas and

their evacuees. They can provide laboratory assistance with food and water testing, for the affected areas. Veterinary response trailers also appear to be available for deployment. The department is assessing the availability of food safety staff and sanitarians, in response to an EMAC request.

#### **Department of Attorney General**

The department has been working on investigations of gas gouging complaints. They have logged nearly 1500 such complaints so far. The department also acts to support other agencies in researching and assuring them about issues of legality and liability, as actions are undertaken.

#### **Department of Civil Rights**

The department notes that there is intense media scrutiny and much speculation about events related to the disaster, some of which should deal more sensitively with the issues of equity and anxiety that surround these events. For example, it is inappropriate for U.S. citizens, affected by a natural disaster, to be called "refugees," as some media outlets have done. (Evacuees is the most accurate term.) Care should also be taken by the media, and in statements to the media, concerning angry and anxious rhetoric. There is a widespread desire to confirm that response to the hurricane event has been proceeding as efficiently and effectively as possible, and that such response has been proportionate to the scale of the disaster, as had been seen in other large-scale events in recent years, in other parts of the country.

Although the need for security and order is clear, there is potential for spreading discontent if the use of force becomes too harsh and disproportionate during the disaster circumstances. This concern is especially notable in cases where media presentations support or reinforce images of unusually harsh treatment of poor and minority residents in the disaster areas. A distinction must be made between the understandable survival efforts of area residents, and the minority of events that are actually criminal in nature, to keep such things in perspective and to reinforce the awareness of equity needs and issues.

#### **Department of Civil Service**

Provisions will be in place for state employees whose skills are requested by affected states, so that if they go to assist in response and recovery activities, they can be provided with the pay and other compensations that normally correspond to such duties as part of government service. In the case of employees who may volunteer for service outside of their paid government duties, the usual of school and community leave time may be used, but leave time should be cleared with a department head to ensure that no gap in services is created by employee activities. The initial assessment of financing these arrangements indicates that employee pay may include overtime for disaster-related work, and that employee compensation for such duties will be paid by the State of Michigan, which will be reimbursed by the state(s) requesting the assistance, which will in turn be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Overtime requests may need to be cleared by the Civil Service Department. Military leave may also be processed for documented disaster relief efforts.

### **Department of Community Health**

The department has a roster of available volunteers ready to help both the disaster area states and the states that are recipients for evacuees. The department has coordinated with the Michigan Hospital Association, and Michigan hospitals will be able to take some patients from the disaster areas. Laboratory work can also be performed to assist the affected states. The department stresses that persons preparing to assist in disaster relief efforts need to ensure that their tetanus, diphtheria, and hepatitis B vaccines are up-to-date. DCH keeps a bank of volunteers that can be accessed when needed.

### **Department of Corrections**

The department has identified two vacant prison facilities and a youth correctional facility that can be used to provide housing should such special needs be requested. There is also a “prison-built” program that can be used to provide for the construction of homes, structures, walls, etc.

### **Department of Education**

The department has sent notification to all superintendents throughout the state so as to facilitate the provision of educational services to any evacuees in need of them. Issues to be addressed include state aid for some students, the waiver of immunization requirements (in cases where documentation of immunization has been destroyed in the disaster), and any issues of anxiety that may be expressed about these provisions. (For example, student testing and results comparison can be adjusted so that any difference in performance by new students will not count for that first year in the new school.)

Tens of thousands of buses are in use throughout the state, a good number of which may potentially be available at some point for temporary use in disaster assistance activities. There are also many available buildings, food service trucks, and other education-related resources that may be useful in providing services.

### **Department of Environmental Quality**

The department has identified air and water quality specialists who are available to provide assistance to affected states as needed.

### **Department of History, Arts and Libraries**

The department can provide assistance with the preservation and conservation of cultural resources, including records management and archival services.

### **Department of Human Services**

The American Human Services Organization is waiving some food stamp rules to ease the provision of food assistance to evacuees. Cash assistance can also be put in place for disaster-affected persons. Enrollment assistance is available for persons needing food stamps and other services. Housing/shelter availability can include special provisions in public shelter facilities and also in juvenile offender facilities, if needed.

Interested parties can contact their local Department of Human Services offices, to inquire about coordinating their donated time and resources with disaster response efforts and the housing and serving of evacuees. If information about local office locations is needed, the general department number can be used, at 517-373-2035.

#### **Department of Information Technology**

A web page for disaster assistance and contributions has been established by the department on the Michigan government web site at <http://www.michigan.gov>. The department has personnel and resources available for establishing information systems, providing technical support, call centers, and so on, to assist as needed and requested by affected states.

**The department also advises citizens and officials to be aware of the possibility of fraudulent or false web sites that may be exploiting citizen efforts for personal gain or otherwise misleading citizens away from the legitimate agencies that are providing disaster relief.** The Michigan government website includes a list of recognized relief organizations that can be contacted for disaster-related contributions and donations.

#### **Department of Labor & Economic Growth**

The department is monitoring oil supplies and has been in contact with major oil companies to encourage them to reduce prices as rapidly as possible, to correspond with improvements in the Midwest's supply situation. MIOSHA has staff ready to provide safety and sanitary assessments, if needed. MSHDA is ready to place families into housing, as needed.

#### **Department of Management and Budget**

A thousand bedding units are available for use. The department can also provide technical and procedural assistance with obtaining the use of leased spaces, making repairs, developing and implementing recovery plans, etc. The department is checking into its surplus property program to assess physical resource availability, if needed. Ten trucks and drivers were identified as available for use in materials transport. Some aircraft are also available (see DMVA entry below). The department is working with a state contract travel agent to create an inventory of Michigan hotels willing to provide free and discounted rooms to evacuees.

#### **Department of Military and Veterans Affairs**

National Guard deployment to the disaster areas has begun, with a deployment point from Taylor, MI this morning and tomorrow morning, to recipient areas in Mississippi (arriving Saturday) and Louisiana (arriving Sunday). Today's deployment consists of 182 personnel, and tomorrow's deployment will lift the total to nearly 500 personnel. Two C-130 aircraft from the Selfridge Air National Guard Base are currently transporting VA patients out of the disaster area, and two more C-130s are available to help move evacuees if needed. Each of these aircraft has the capacity to transport up to 90 persons. An MP battalion, MP company, and water purification units are also ready for deployment. The department is also coordinating with the Office of the Budget to arrange for funds to be provided for troop deployments. The department includes two trucking companies and has identified 150 trucks and drivers that can provide assistance, if needed.

### **Department of Natural Resources**

The department has identified 58 conservation officers who have the needed training and authority to assist with disaster operations. Skills include those of forest fire officers, chainsaw use, and capability for other disaster and debris-removal activities. The department can also assist the affected states with health assessments, should the capabilities of the Southeast Disease Cooperative require supplementing. The department is evaluating its inventory of equipment for that which can be provided to the affected states.

### **Department of State**

#### **Department of State Police**

The department's Emergency Management Division is providing the main coordination of all Michigan government activities, as well as acting as liaison between local, nonprofit, and private resources, and the governments in other states and at the federal level (FEMA). Military supplies and aircraft are available, to be requested through EMAC. There are forensic resources available to affected areas, upon request. Assistance can also be provided, if needed, with conducting background checks.

A request for task forces, from Mississippi, is being answered, in part, by the assembly of two forces, totaling 210 personnel, by the Michigan Department of State Police. This includes 200 soldiers, 10 commanding officers, vehicles, and possible a helicopter as well.

#### **Department of Transportation**

The department is doing an internal tally to assess how much of its equipment, pilots, and other personnel are available to assist with answering EMAC requests that may be made by the affected states. The department also has points of contact with various private sector organizations that they are surveying, to determine what additional Michigan resources will be available for deployment or remote use. The department has identified a half dozen major bus companies that are interested in cooperating with disaster response and relief activities. There is the potential for motor vehicle manufacturers to identify extra and surplus vehicles that could be used in the disaster areas or for supporting roles related to such activities. The department has a 40' tractor trailer that can be used in response and recovery activities. The vehicle includes bridge repair capabilities.

#### **Department of Treasury**

The department can provide assistance with financial management, and support functions for other state agencies. In addition, they are looking into the financial options available for Michigan students who may have been attending colleges in the affected disaster areas, to see about easing or forgiving loan requirements, for example.

**The Office on Aging** is ready to consider requests for assistance, and notes that there is a congregate meal capacity that can potentially be used to serve evacuees.